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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2-2-06

SPONSOR Begaye LAST UPDATED _____ HB 508

SHORT TITLE At-Risk Youth Character Development Program SB _____

ANALYST Surdi

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	\$250.0	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 508 makes an appropriation of \$250.0 to the Public Education Department (PED) from the general fund for FY 2007 to implement four tribal and four non-tribal character development programs for at-risk youths in eight schools. Any unexpended or unencumbered funds shall revert back to the general fund at the end of FY 2007.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$250.0 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY 2007 shall revert to the general fund.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Through the adoption of the New Mexico Standards for Excellence, under 6.30.2.8, the PED addresses the issue of character education. This section identifies the personal qualities of individuals that New Mexico schools and communities recognize and promotes character education. (PED-LITES Program, Character Education).

A character education program:

- Is a *framework*, employed by schools, communities, businesses and other organizations helping millions of youths to develop the Six Pillars of Character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. (www.charactercounts.org).
- Is research supported and in-line with *No Child Left Behind* requirements.
- Studies repeatedly show that character education reduces misbehavior and improves the focus on school.
- Studies show it cuts crime, drug abuse and other misbehavior and bolsters students' commitment to school. Teachers commonly say that the whole school climate changes.

The character development concept is supported by the Josephson Institute of Ethics (www.josephsoninstitute.org).

Inclusion of four tribal schools will promote the goals of the PED as it implements the Indian Education Act of 2003 to:

- Partner with tribes to increase tribal involvement and control over schools and the education of students located in tribal communities; and,
- Provide for the study, development and implementation of educational systems that positively affect the educational success of American Indian students.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The PED is the administrative agency for the bill. PED would need to assign staff to assist in developing an RFP and provide fiscal oversight.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Other sources of funds would have to be found to provide character development programs for at-risk youths in the eight schools.

GS/nt